

*The Kingdom of Jesus Christ :*

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*In Answer to some Points treated of, in the  
Rights of the Christian Church.*

IN A

SERMON

Preach'd before the

Right Reverend Father in God,

JONATHAN

Lord Bishop of *Winchester*,

AT HIS

PRIMARY VISITATION

AT

GUILFORD, July 5. 1708.

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JOHN XVIII. 36.

*Jesus answered, my Kingdom is not of this World.*

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By WILLIAM WHITFIELD, Chaplain in Ordinary to Her Majesty.

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Publish'd by his Lordship's Command, at the desire of his  
CLERGY.

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TO THE

Right Reverend Father in God,

J O N A T H A N,

*Lord Bishop of Winchester,*And Prelate of the most Noble Order of  
the G A R T E R.

My LORD,

**T**HIS Sermon, Compos'd as I remember before any Answer was Publish'd to the Rights of the Church, being Preach'd again before your LORDSHIP at your Primary Visitation (with an Addition of the Applicatory part,) Humbly Begs to be Admitted amongst others Preach'd on that Occasion upon the same Subject, as a Testimony of the Common Concern of your Clergy for the Interests of the Christian Religion and our Establish'd Church; and of the Reliance they have in your LORDSHIP for their Defence against the Insolencies of a late Adversary to the Christian Priesthood and Holy Sacraments.

*This is indeed a Cause wherein, I truly believe, there is an Unanimous Concurrence of the whole Body of our Church. For besides the Unanswerable Treatises it hath produced; there have been many Excellent Discourses from the Pulpit in our Vindication, Preach'd everywhere before our Right Reverend Bishops or their Arch-Deacons at their Visitations; with their Approbation, and to the Good Liking of their Clergy. I wish more of them had been under the same Commands, your LORDSHIP hath been Pleas'd to lay upon the Unworthiest, to be Publish'd: for then perhaps not one Erroneous Principle or Wrested Citation in that Book, (being taken to Pieces by so many Hands,) would have escap'd Examination and a Just Censure.*

*What Advantage then hath this Author gain'd by his Invectives, and Odious Names of Division and Faction Objected to us? Whatever Contempt He may please to throw upon our Order, He plainly sees that no one of it is so far Lost and Stigmatiz'd, as to appear Publickly on the same side with him. He meets his Disappointment of Appealing to our Church, under any Denomination, by seeing the whole Clergy, as one Man, Rise up against him. Let him Consider then, from what other Communion of Protestants he may expect his Thanks, for Arraigning that Church which the most Sober and Learned of them have acknowledged to be their Bulwark against Popery. And let him Reflect, in what Society he must naturally herd, in his Reproaches of the Christian Priesthood, and Profaneness against the Holy Sacraments.*

*The many Attacks that have been made against the Constitution of our Church ever since the Reformation; your LORDSHIP very well knows, have hitherto turned to our Advantage; by raising up a Righteous Zeal in our Clergy, and the Learned Gentlemen of our Communion, in its Defence: Who have set Argument against Argument, without Considering the Person of the Opponent. And He that shall write with the Meekness of the Gospel concerning the Church of Christ, may propose his Reasons and Schemes in the words of Sobriety and Truth; and if he please, Conceal his Name, which doth no ways affect the Cause. But in the case of foul Slander, amidst an heap of malicious Falshoods, (against all the Rules of Charity and Good Manners,) the only way of Vindication that remains, is to appeal to the World, by shewing from what Quiver these Poisoned Arrows come. If from a Suspected Papist, the less Dangerous will they be to a Protestant Reader; if from one of known Immorality, the Good and Religious will have no regard to his Railings. The very knowing such a Writer, will go a great way towards the answering his Arguments of this kind.*

*And there was cause my LORD, that in the latter end of my Sermon Vid. p. 15. &c. after the Reasoning Part was over, I have hinted something of this concerning Popery, &c. To which, without breach of Charity may be added, (what every Protestant hath a Right to demand,) that we do hereby call upon Dr. W. Tindall, the boasted Author of this Piece, to be satisfied, How and When He hath again Embraced the Reformed Religion, and Renounced the Idolatrous Errors of the Church of Rome. If in the Reign of the late King James He abjur'd the Protestant Faith, and Communion of the Church of England, under the Name of Heresy, where and before whom, hath He publicly recanted that Abjuration? Is his Book of the RIGHTS His Penitence for his APOSTACY? Doth his Treatment of the Church of England justify his being a sincere Convert to it? Is his coming to the Lord's Table any Evidence? Witness his Prophane abuses of the most Blessed Sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Saviour! And suitable to his detestable Writing ( I fear ) his way of Receiving it since. His saying, that it is Conjuraton and a Grace Cup; and the Offertory, only paying his Club, is surely no Evidence of his Discerning the Lord's Body. In short, his Railings against our Church throughout the whole Book, smell strong of the Renegade; and his Inferences at the latter end of it, is the Language of the Papist still.*

*But I need not move your LORDSHIP's Resentment in a Cause wherein you have been a Confessor, whilst others fell from the Faith. Your LORDSHIP's Firmness in that difficult time of Tryal, is a standing Proof of your Abhorrence of those Principles, which then tempted such Men to the Betraying our Church and Reformation, and still urge them onto Unchristian Revilings. Popery under any Shape or Disguise, and Blasphemy barefac'd, can never want your just Indignation; nor your wonted Zeal to protect them who Engage against these Adversaries. Amongst whom I shall always desire the Honour of Subscribing my self.*

My Lord, your Lordship's

most Obedient and Dutiful Son and Servant,

William Whitfield.

## JOHN XVIII. 36.

*Jesus answered, my Kingdom is not of this World:*

**I**N this answer to *Pilat*, our Blessed Saviour is so far from disowning himself to be a King, that he asserts his Regal Title in very plain Terms. *Thou sayst that I am a King. To this End was I Born, and for this cause came I into the World, that I should bear Witness unto the Truth.*

V. 37. — But his Kingdom was not of this World.

For the Kingdom of the Messiah, (so oft spoken of by the Prophets) is the Kingdom of God, and of Heaven, the Dominion of Christ, the city of God. &c. Vid. Dan. 11. 44. VII 14. 27. Hebr. 1. 8. 11. 8. the End of its Rule on Earth is for the Salvation of our Souls. It Consists of the Elect of God, call'd out from the World, and Translated from the Power of Darknes, into the Kingdom of his dear Son. A peculiar People, Zealous of Good Works for whom Christ gave himself, that he might purify them to himself from all Iniquity. Col. 1. 13. 1 Pet. 2. 9.

For which purpose, Grace and the Holy Spirit of God are necessary; not the Arm of Flesh or secular Power. God hath indeed set Christ far above all Principality, and Power, and Might, and Dominion, and every Name that is Named, not only in this World, but in that also which is to come: Eph. 1. 21. 22. He hath put all things under his Feet, and given him to be the Head over all things. But 'tis to the Church. That Church of God which he hath purchas'd with his own Blood: Acts 20. 28. To which, at the Apostles first Preaching, the Lord added daily such as should be saved, 11. 47. in one day about 3000 Souls; without lessening the Number of any Earthly Prince's Subjects. And (if the Prophecies of the Old Testament, Vid. Dan. VII. 24. 27. or the Parables and Promises of the New have Truth,) Its Dominion shall be enlarged, till all the Kingdoms of the Earth shall become subject to the Scepter of Christ, without detriment to the Rights and Powers of the Governments of this World; but Confirming their just Authority, wherever the Kingdom of Christ shall be establish'd in Truth and Righteousness.

But now, concerning this Kingdom of our Blessed Saviour and Redeemer, there are two Fatal Errors: The one calculated for disturbing the Peace, and invading the Rights of Mankind, under pretence of a Claim from Christ, (or perhaps of his Vicar,) to Earthly Dominion and Property. — To these as well as to *Pilat*, our Lord says in my Text, *My Kingdom is not of this World.* — The other is no less pernicious in a contrary way; for it brings the Kingdom of Christ, (even as to those things wherein it consists,) under Subjection to the State; and will not allow the Powers of the one to be distinct from the Authority of the other. That Religion which the Prince Commands, (tho, of the *Leviathan*, [ *Leviath.* ] instead of the Gospel) is to be professed, and not that which Jesus Christ hath Instituted.

These and such like Errors, in *Erastus*, Mr, *Hobbs*, and \* *Rights of the Christian Church* a late \* Author, arise in General from hence, because there is no coercive Power in the Kingdom of Christ. Contrary to Earthly Dominion and Worldly Wisdom, the Faith



of the Gospel is founded upon Sufferings: For which Reason, the Commands of Christ, and Precepts of the Apostles, we are told, are only so much of Advice and Persuasion; no more binding than the Physician's Prescriptions to his Patient, or the Lawyer's Council to his Client. If Enacting Laws be Essential to the Supreme Power; this is deny'd to Christ in his Kingdom: If it be necessary, that there shou'd be a proper Ministry belonging to his Church; 'tis asserted, that any Man, (not called or set apart for performing Divine Offices,) or Woman, may Administer Baptism and the Supper of the Lord; may admit Subjects into Christ's Kingdom; but that no one hath Authority to exclude from thence. *Hobbs Leviath.* *Rights of the Christian Church.*

In answer to these kind of Doctrines it may suffice to shew in General;

I. That Jesus Christ, as King and Law-giver hath given proper Laws to his Church, and Enforc'd them with Penal Sanctions.

II. That he hath appointed a distinct Order of Men, to Minister in Holy things in his Church.

III. That he hath invested these his Ministers, with the sole Authority of admitting Members into his Church, and of excluding from its Communion.

1. As to the first, let us consider but this one thing. The Kingdom of Christ is said to relate only to another Life. But the Consideration of a future State doth necessarily imply a proper Care and Administration in this Life, on which Eternity doth depend: This World (if we do not believe *Purgatory*;) is the only place, wherein any thing may be done, that is available to Everlasting Life. And of all Institutions, that of the Gospel is the weakest, if (professing to bring us to Eternal Happiness) it hath been wanting in any necessary Obligations or Directions, in the way to our Heavenly Country. *Moses*, and even *Mahomet* have set forth their Laws relating to this Life; which at this day, are observed as such. And Jesus Christ is that Prophet, of whom *Moses* said unto the children of Israel, *A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren like unto me.* Acts 7. 37. Deut 18. 15. *Him shall ye hear.* Matt. 5. 28. 34. And with that Authority he speaks in the Gospel. *I say unto you, whosoever looketh upon a Woman to Lust after her, hath committed Adultery with her. I say unto you, swear not at all, &c.*

Herein, either there was something added by Christ, to make the Law more perfect; or else there was a New Interpretation given to it. If Christ added to the Law of God, he was in that a Law-giver as much as he that at first said, Thou shalt not Commit Adultery. If Christ only interpreted these Laws (that the *Jews* might understand the true Scope and Force of them) His Interpretation of what was not before known, became then a known Law. And he being sent from God to declare his Will, who shall say that the Will of God revealed by him, is not a Law, unless it shall be made so, by us his Creatures? If all Power of Governing and making Laws is derived from God, shall not he who gives this Power, have the greater Authority?

But that Jesus Christ did actually Exercise this Authority as a Law-giver is Evident,

1. From his Changing and Dissolving the Mosaical Law.
2. From the New Commands he hath given.
3. From the Penal Sanctions he hath inforc'd his Laws with.

1. For first, tho Christ came to fulfil the Law in its moral Precepts, yet it is certainly now alter'd and dissolv'd in what was Ceremonial. The Jewish Sabbath is chang'd to the Lord's Day : The Feast of the Passover to the Lord's Supper ; and Circumcision into Baptism : With an utter Abolition of the Legal Sacrifices. All which (tho' now alter'd or annull'd,) were once positive, indispensable Laws. By God's own Appointment, *that Man was stoned, who was found gathering sticks on the Sabbath. The Uncircumcised Man-child was to be cut off from his People.* Numb. 15. 35. Gen. 17. 14. But now we may as lawfully work on the last day of the Week as on any other ; there is now, no Circumcision. It requir'd then the same Power to abrogate or change these Laws, as at first to make them.

2. Christ hath given us new Laws. *A new Commandment, I give unto you, that you love one another. Love your Enemies, do good to them that hate you. Ye have heard that it hath been said, an Eye for an Eye, and a Tooth for a Tooth. But I say unto you, that ye resist not Evil, &c.* John 17. 34. Mat. 5. 44. This Gospel-Love and Meekness were not Evident in the Law ; and will not, I suppose, be said to be of the Law of Nature. *Take, Eat, do this in remembrance of me* (and St. Paul receiv'd the same from the Lord.) *Goye and Baptize all Nations, &c.* Luke 22. 19. 1 Cor. 11. 23. Mat. 28. 19. This is as solemn an Institution of the two Christian Sacraments as the Command was for the Passover or Circumcision : And our Obligation to them must arise from the Command and positive Institution of Jesus Christ.

Yet still, all outward Force is wanting to Compel our Obedience. But what is there, besides Natural Conscience, and Right Reason, which do call to us in the Laws of Nature? And common Prudence and Conscience in Human Laws? And why may not a Christian's Conscience, oblige him, and Prudence direct Rational Men, without Compulsion? The end of Coercion in Civil Societies, is to guard the Law (as far as it may) by inflicting such Punishments upon the stubborn and disobedient, whereby they shall receive greater pain in suffering, than they took pleasure in the Act of Transgressing. Sanguinary Laws can do no more than thus persuade; the Wise and Good, from the Advantage of Obeying; and the Evil minded, from the Terrour of the Punishment. As long as we are free Agents, no Law can forcibly bind down to Obedience, in any one point: Tho' the Punishment be Capital, it cannot prevent the Laws being every day broken. Consider then, whether the Laws of God may not impress a stronger Sense of Obligation upon the Minds both of the Good and Bad, in proportion to the greater Rewards and Punishments which they do hold forth.

For 3dly, they also have their Penal Sanctions. And therefore that is not merely persuasion, and Advice only, which is enforc'd by the Terror of Punishments annexed to the Transgression and Disobedience. The Lawyer and Physician do not threaten Penalties, if their Directions shall not be observ'd; but so doth Jesus Christ, and, thro' his Power, his Apostles. *He that believeth not shall be Damned.* Mark. 16. 16. *Cast the unprofitable Servant into outer Darkness.* Mat. 5. 26. *Bind him hand and foot, and Cast him into outer Darkness.* 22. 13. *There shall be Weeping and gnashing Teeth. Agree with thine Adversary, lest he deliver thee to the Judge, and the Judge to the Officer, and thou be Cast into Prison.* 25. 30. *Verily I say unto thee, thou shalt*

*Shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost Farthing. Depart from ye Cursed into Everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels. The Unrighteous shall not Inherit the Kingdom of God. Neither Fornicators, &c. Matth. 25. 41. 1. Cor. 6. 9.*

And tho' these Punishments are reserv'd to another State, yet the actions, against which the Sentence is pronounced, belong to this Life only; and so consequently must the Law also as to its Obligation, tho' the Punishment be hereafter. The Law of our Country which is against Self-Murder, doth not take place as to its Punishment, till after the Death of the Criminal; but for all that, it is a Law; and the Sentence of having Christian Burial denyed, with the Circumstances attending it, hath restrain'd many a Man from committing that Violence. And why may not the Sentence of Damnation, of being cast out into outer Darkness, and into Everlasting Fire, and of not Inheriting the Kingdom of God, (Sanctions more penal and terrifying than Man can inflict) have the same Effect upon Christians, to Guard the Laws of the Gospel?

In short, let it be considered from those Properties which do constitute any Law, whether the Precepts of the Gospel do not carry more of force with them, than the Laws of Men. They are commanded either by Jesus Christ, who *had all Power given unto him by God in Heaven and in Earth*; Matth. 28. 18. or else by *Holy Men of God*, who were his Apostles. Christ himself, as the Apostle of his Father, *spake not of Himself, but as his Father taught him*. Jo. 14. 10. And the Apostles of Christ (as well as the Prophets in old time) *spake not of themselves, but as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*. 2 P. 1. 21. For *all Scripture is given by Inspiration from God*. 2 Tim. III. 16. The Commands of him then, who had all power from God, and the Precepts of them that were his Apostles, speak with greater Authority than the Laws of Men can. And from whence ariseth the Obligation to obey Human Laws? Not primarily and merely from Man, (for then all the Laws of Man are always to be obey'd;) but it is from the Superior Law of God: They must be conformable to that *Greater Law*, whereinsoever they can oblige; when contrary to it, 'tis our Duty not to obey. And to the end that we may not be ignorant of the Tenor of God's Law, it hath had its Promulgation, far beyond what any Human Law could ever shew; It hath bin publish'd every day from the beginning, to the whole Christian World: For the same Reason that the Law of *Moses was read every Sabbath day in the Synagogues*, Acts XV. 21. the Gospel of Christ is constantly read in his Church. The Good which this Law proposes is far greater than the Law of Man (of it self) could ever intend; our temporal and Eternal Welfare. Its Obligation reaches the Conscience, over which man hath no direct Dominion. It requireth Truth in the inward Parts, in which Man hath no knowledge. Its Rewards and Punishments (as they are greater, so they) are more certain; for the Murderer may escape; the Righteous may be oppress'd in this World; but to neither can fail the Award of the last Day: for *God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in Righteousness, by that Man whom he hath ordained*. Acts XVII. 31. Here is a Judge, and a Day for Judgment Appointed: If there are no Laws in the Gospel, upon what must the Sentence be ground'd? By what Rule must we be acquitted or Condemn'd?

If then we Consider the Authority of the Law-giver, the end of Divine Laws, the sufficiency of their Promulgation, the greatness and certainty of their Rewards and Punishments (or any thing else, that we yet know to be Essential to make a Law valid,) how can it be said with Consistency of Reason or Religion, that Jesus Christ, hath not Establish'd Laws in his Gospel? which are to be receiv'd as the Word of God it self, (in which they are contain'd,) not as the Word of Men, but as it is in Truth, the Word of God, 1 Theff. II. 13.

II. To shew that there is a distinct Order of Men appointed to Officiate in the Church of Christ. This may be consider'd in 4 particulars.

1. With respect to Christ himself.
2. To his Apostles.
3. With regard to those whom the Apostles sent into the Vineyard.
4. With respect to the Practice of the Church since their Time.

1. As to the first, the Author to the *Hebrews* proves, that even Jesus Christ had his Call from God. Because (as he argues) Every high Priest taken from among Men, is ordained for Men in things pertaining to God; that he may offer both Gifts and Sacrifices for Sins. Heb. V. 1. As the High Priest is ordained in things pertaining to God, God alone may empower him to offer Sacrifices for Sins; for who can forgive Sins but God alone? Luke V. 21. If he be taken from among Men, and ordained for Men, then is he set apart and particularly appointed to this Office. To this purpose the Apostle makes a very important Comparison between Christ's Priesthood and Aaron's; and shews the *Hebrews* (who, be sure, were Zealous for that Priesthood which God had so particularly appointed among them, the Preference of Christ's Priesthood in all respects. 1. Both were Priests; they of Aaron only Temporary, with a Continual Succession; but Christ's Priesthood was perpetual. 2. Both were call'd of God: Christ with an Oath; call'd as a Son immediately by his Father's Voice from Heaven: Heb. V. The Jewish Priest's, without an Oath; call'd as Servants, immediately by men; call'd after Aaron's Order, but Christ after Melchizedek's; before, and higher than Aaron. 3. Both offered for Sins; they (for their own, as well as of others) offered the Sacrifices of the Law: But Christ, being without Sin, offer'd himself on the Cross, only for other Mens Sins. If Christ therefore, Glorified not himself to be made an high Priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee, No man (says the Apostle) taketh this Honour unto himself, but he that is call of God, Heb. V. 4. 5.

2. And therefore 2dly, the Apostles and Disciples of Christ, were a Select Company of Men, chosen and call'd by himself, as he was by God; as one from the Receipt of Custom, out of the Publicans. Others from mending their Nets. Math. IX. 9. IV. 21. One Carist refused; The Scribe who said unto him, master I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. VIII. 19. One was call'd but would not follow; the Young Rich Man to whom Christ said, Sell that thou hast, and give to the Poor, and come and follow me: But he went away sorrowful. XIX. 21, 22. Which shews that all Men were not alike fit for the Kingdom of Christ, nor capable of being his Disciples. But now to these Chosen Vessels, Christ gave Power against unclean Spirits; to heal all manner of sickness; to preach the Gospel; and to let their Peace  
come



come upon that House which was worthy; but in any that was not worthy to let their Peace return to themselves; and to shake off the Dust of their Feet against that City or House. X. 1. &c.

Christ declares moreover after his Resurrection, that all Power was given unto him in Heaven and in Earth: XVIII. 18. And in the plenitude of that Authority he gives forth his Commandments to his Apostles. — Go ye therefore and Teach all Nations, Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 19. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have Commanded you: 20. And Lo! I am with you alway, even to the end of the World. Christ tells them farther, that the Comforter which is the Holy Ghost (whom my Father shall send in my Name,) he shall Teach you all things, and bring all things to your Remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you, John XIV. 26.

From hence we may observe 1. That as Christ himself was call'd and sent by God, so there was a chosen Company of Men appointed by him to Preach his Gospel, who had Reason therefore to style themselves, *not the Apostles of Men, neither by Man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father.* Gal. I. 1. 2. All those things which Christ had commanded, they that receiv'd his Gospel, were to be taught to observe 3. This Commission given to the Apostles was of a mighty extent, to Disciple and Baptize all Nations: And it must necessarily employ more Hands, and last to the end of time; for to Teach and Baptize all Nations, was not to be done by Twelve Men, and finish'd in the Apostolick Age. We know that the far greater part of this Work is still unperform'd in many large Regions: And as long as there shall be successive Generations of Men born in the Christian World, there will be Successions of new Subjects, to be still added to the Kingdom of Christ. As therefore this Commission extended to all Nations, so likewise doth the promise of Christ, (*Lo I am with you always, even to the end of the World*) Matt. 28. 20. reach to the end of Time; not only to the Apostles, but to their Successors; who to the World's end will be still Discipling and Baptizing all Nations, and new Generations of Men. Lastly, It appears from hence, that whatsoever the Apostles Instituted in the Church of Christ. was not only by the mere direction of the Holy Spirit, which yet is enough to lay on us all Obligation to obey,) but it was by the Holy Ghost's bringing all things to their Remembrance which Christ had said unto them. John 14. 26. How then could the v otherwise understand that saying, than as Christ's direction, how they shou'd send the Ministers of the Gospel, *as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you?* 20, 21. if they were sent by Christ, even as his Father sent him, they must necessarily be invested, with a power to call and send others after them; for so Christ was sent by God; and so the Nature of the Work appointed to them, requir'd.

And thirdly, so the Apostles call'd and sent others to preach; not without distinction, but Men with Solemnity set apart for the Work. And the Question which the Apostle asks, determines this Point. *Are all Apostles? Are all Prophets? Are all Teachers?* &c. No! *God hath set some; first Apostles, Secondly Prophets; Thirdly Teachers, &c.* 1 Cor. 12. 29, 28. God (not Man) hath set them in this Order. *If the whole Body were an Eye, (enlighten'd throughout to guide and direct, and not servicable to any other*

other use, ) *Where then were the Hearing?* 17. If all might be Teachers, where then were those that are to be instructed? This Doctrine is not only built on the Authority of an Apostle, but grounded on *Natural Reason*; which shews the Confusion that must needs follow, if every Man shou'd usurp the Right of Preaching the Gospel, Administring the Sacraments and Governing the Church.

Let us then see what was the Practice of the Apostles, and of the Church in their Days. The first whom they chose, was into the place of *Judas*: They appointed two; *Justus and Matthias*; and pray'd, Lord, *tho knowest the Hearts of all Men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen*; and they gave forth the Lots, and the Lot fell upon *Matthias*. Acts 1. 23. The next were the Seven Deacons, to whom even that lower Office of distributing the Alms of the Church, was not Committed without a particular designation. The choice of fit Persons was indeed from the Brethren——6. 3. *Brethren, look ye out among you Seven Men* (not of the promiscuous Multitude but Seven Men) of *Honest Report, full of the Holy Ghost*.——And then the Appointment of these Good and Holy Men, must be from the Apostles; \* *whom we may Appoint over this Business* (say they) not whom ye may Appoint, (as hath been often observ'd, some Faulty Copies of our *English Bibles* render it.) Wherefore to the Apostles also belong'd the Ordination of them, by laying on of Hands: *For they set them before the Apostles, and when they had pray'd, they lay'd their Hands on them*; 6. and the Word of God increased, and the Number of the Disciples multiply'd in *Jerusalem* greatly. 7.

Nay even where the Direction of the Holy Ghost interven'd, to Appoint by Name those that should settle the Church among the *Gentiles*; yet the Mission and Ordination of them was reserv'd to the Governors of the Church, as when the Holy Ghost said, *Separate me Barnabas and Saul, for the Work whereunto I have call'd them*. 13. 2. The one a Good Man, full of the Holy Ghost and Faith; who had taught much People at *Antioch*, that were added to the Lord. 11. 24. The other, miraculously Converted; who had already Preach'd Christ in the Synagogues, and Confounded the Jews at *Damascus*. Acts 9. 20. &c. And both, now called by Name, † by the Holy Ghost to this Work. Nevertheless they were to be separated, have the Hands of the Governours of the Church laid on them, and receive their Mission from them. And accordingly when they had fasted and pray'd and laid their Hands on them, they sent them away. Acts 13. 3.

By Vertue of the same Commission to the Apostles, were *James, Timothy and Titus* set over the Churches of *Jerusalem, Ephesus and Crete*. Timothy, put in mind by St. Paul, to stir up the Gift of God which was in him, by the putting on of his Hands. 2 Tim. 1. 6. Exhorted, to lay Hands suddenly on no Man. 1 Tim. 5. 22. Neither to partake with other Mens Sins. The things which he had Learned of St. Paul, the same to Commit to faithful Men, who should be able to Teach others also: 2 Tim. 2. 2. And so, to continue down a

\* ὅς καὶ καταστήσωμεν ἐν τῇ χρείᾳ λαῶν.

† St. Clement tells us that in his times they ordained Bishops *ἐκείνους δὲ διακόνους*. 1 Ep. ad Cor.

succession of faithful Teachers. For this end, was *Titus* left by St. Paul in *Crete*, that he might set in order the things that were wanting, ( or left undone ) and ordain Elders in every City as he had Appointed him. *Tit. 1. 5.* If every Man without distinction might Preach the Gospel, the ordaining Elders in every City needed not to be recommended in particular to *Titus*. This was not one of the things wanting or left undone, if all Men had a Right to Preach and Administer other Offices in the Church.

And with this laying on of Hands, there was *Authority* likewise given; them that Sin'd, to Rebuke before all; that others might fear. *1 Tim. 5. 20.* To Rebuke sharply and with all Authority; that they might be found in the Faith. *Tit. 1. 13. 2. 5.* And even over the Elders themselves, *Timothy* had Power given him, as is evident by that Precept of the Apostles, not to receive an Accusation against an Elder, but before two or three Witnesses. *1 Tim. 5. 19.*

From hence it appears, that all Men in Common have not a right to the Priestly Office: From Christ's having his Call from God, and from the choice which himself made of his own Apostles and Disciples; after that, from the Apostles setting apart proper Persons for the Apostleship and Ministry; and from the Command of the Holy Ghost to separate and ordain, whom even himself had call'd; and lastly from the several Rules given, about choosing fit Men for the Work. All which laid together, doth abundantly illustrate the Argument of St. Paul; *How shall Men call on God, in whom they have not believ'd? And how shall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a Preacher? And how shall they Preach, except they be sent?* *Rom. 10. 14.*

4. And now fourthly, whether the Church of Christ hath followed these Precepts and Examples of the Apostles ( as they followed Christ's ) may be best learned from its constant Practice. Of which it cannot be the Task of this place to give a particular Account. But in general it may be affirm'd that above 1500 Years after Christ, none were suffer'd to officiate in Holy Things, and acknowledg'd by the Faithful, who were not thus admitted to the Ministry. † Baptism by Lay Hands, was only in Cases of absolute necessity; and then, not without Licence from the Governours of the Church: Absurdly therefore argued for, when there is no such necessity, and no Licence given. *Eruementius*, who Preach'd the Gospel and Converted a People \*, immediately receiv'd Episcopal Ordination, that he might be their Lawful Pastor, and settle the Church. And to convert Unbelievers, or reclaim the Ungodly, is the Duty of every Good Christian; to whom nevertheless it is not permitted to Minister in the Publick, without a lawful Call. For as it is said in our 23d Article. ' It is not lawful for any Man to take upon him the Office of Publick Preaching or Ministering in the Church, before he be lawfully call'd and sent to execute the same. And those we ought to judge lawfully call'd and sent, which be chosen and call'd to this Work by Men who have Publick

† Rights of the Christian Church, chap. 4.

\* In the *Abyssin Æthiopia*; after which he return'd to give St. *Athanasius* an Account of his Success, and to Entreat him to send a Bishop and Clergy to the place, which *Athanasius* immediately did, ordaining him Bishop, and telling him, he knew none more Worthy to be their Pastor and Form the Church there.

\* Authority given them in the Congregation, to call and send Ministers into the Vineyard.

And tho' in a late Exposition of this Article a Learning and Reverend Prelate (not quoted in his own Words by this Author,) says, "that this Authority and Power may be devolved upon the Prince or supreme Power, (who comprehends virtually the whole People in him;) and that, even the People may have this Power, who (separating from a defil'd Worship) may choose some of their own Number to Minister in Holy things; and that this is not annull'd or condemn'd by this Article. — Yet (with the lowest Submission and Deference) I most Humbly propose that this cannot be Construed for the meaning of this Article (as it is an Article of the Church of *England*,) for the Reason; because in the Preface to the Form of Ordination, &c. it is expressly said "That no Man shall be accounted or taken to be, a lawful Bishop, Priest or Deacon, (or suffer'd to execute any of the said Functions) except he be call'd, tryed, examin'd and admitted thereunto, according to the Form hereafter following, or hath had formerly Episcopal Ordination or Consecration. — Now the calling of the Ministers of Christ according to this Form, is by Bishops; which is here affirmed to be the only Lawful call in our Church. — But this without any Mention, Consideration, or Reflection upon the constitution of Foreign Churches that are without Bishops; which therefore it belongs not to us to censure.

III. As to my last particular, that these Ministers of Jesus Christ are invested with the *sole* Power of admitting Members into his Church, and likewise of Excluding from its Communion, the Time permits me to speak only in short and in general. As first;

1. That the Church of Christ is a Society of Faithful Believers, to whom the Mercies of God are made over by the covenant in the Gospel, whereof they are admitted to be partakers, by Baptism: In which we may distinguish between the Office of Baptizing, and the Right of Administring or denying that Sacrament. A Power, which evidently appears in the Baptism of the Adult; which in the Primitive Times, was not without the tryal of several Years; and our Rubrick orders not to be done without Notice first given to the Bishop at least a Week before; that so due care may be taken for their Examination &c. And if through Ignorance, Heresy or open Immorality, the Persons shall be unqualified to be partakers of the covenant of Grace, it is in the Power of the Minister to refuse Baptism; and he performs his Trust by so doing. If, for example, they shall be found to be Ignorant of, or to deny any of the Articles of the Christian Faith, (which yet in baptism they are solemnly to profess that they do believe;) or if it be their Opinion, or avow'd Practice, to indulge themselves in carnal Sins, (all which they are there bound to Renounce; or if they disown the Divinity of any of the Persons of the Holy Trinity (in whose Name they come to be Baptiz'd;) who will then say, that they are fit for Baptism, which doth so solemnly engage them to the contrary?

And it cannot be the compact and consent of Christians, (of which some are so fond in all cases of Submission, from whence this Power ariseth, because it is exercis'd before their confederation, and before they are Christians; for



Baptism is the Initiating Federal Rite: But whether they shall be admitted to Baptism, or not, belongs to the Pastoral Trust. It is indeed by the *Consent* of the adult Person, that he submits to this Tryal and Examination; but without it he cannot be Baptiz'd: His consent therefore doth plainly argue an antecedent Right in the Pastor, to judg of his fitness, and a general Trust to be lodg'd in him, of administering or denying Baptism, according to the Qualifications of the Persons that present themselves to him. Which also is the same in respect of the other Christian Sacrament, of the Lord's Supper.

2. The exercise of this Power and Trust concerning the admission of the Members into the Church of Christ, doth in it self imply a Power of Excluding from its Communion all those that shall openly and wickedly violate the conditions of the Gospel-Covenant; which having engag'd themselves to abide by, they were on that account made Christians. It is Evident that they forfeit their Right to the Gospel-Promises by living impenitently in Contradiction to the conditions of the Covenant; and when their Heresy or Depravedness shall become Notorious, (for *Ecclesia non Cognoscit nisi de Publicis,*) to the end that the Blasphemy of Unbelievers, and all Offence and Corruption of the good may be avoided, is it not reasonable that they should be thrown out of the Communion of the Faithful, whom they so sorely afflict and tempt by depraving the true Faith, or by their impurity of Life? How can the Pastor secure his Flock from the Contagion, without the Power of Excluding from it there Rotten and infectious Members? For what purpose hath the *Holy Ghost made overseers* to \* *feed the Church of God*, if they have not Authority to preserve its Peace and Welfare, (against the Feuds and Factions of Heresy and Schism, and against obstinate disobedience to the Commands of the Gospel,) by doing whatsoever is necessary to *keep the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace*, Eph. IV. 3. and in Righteousness of Life?

This Power and Jurisdiction, as to the Exercise of it in a Christian State (fearing God and not persecuting the Church,) we all own, may and must be regulated in such a manner by the Authority of the Magistrate, as best conduces, to the Mutual Happiness and Tranquillity both of Church and State. For, as Arch Bishop *Laud* said in his Speech in the *Star-Chamber*, "Tho' our Office be from God and Christ immediately, yet may we not Exercise that Power either of Order or Jurisdiction) but as God hath appointed us: That is, not in his Majesty's, or any Christian King's Kingdoms, but by, and under the Power of the King, given us so to do. — Which is the more remarkable, because a late Author says, that in the censure of *Bastwick*, all the Bishops then present denied openly, that they had their Jurisdiction as Bishops from the King.

This Jurisdiction therefore cannot clash with the civil Authority, and set up two Independent Powers opposing each other in a Christian State, How often must they be told, that we do profess the Religion of the Gospel; which doth not at all meddle with the outward Condition of Men, but leaves the Servant and the Master, the bond and the free, the Subject and the Prince, just in the same State it found them; but under stricter Obligations of performing their Respective Duties? So that these Powers (the Ecclesiastical and Civil)

\* *Poimainew* which signifies also to Govern. Acts 20. 28 :

are not about the *same* thing, but under different Laws. 'Tis not the same thing to make a *Citizen* and a *Christian*: The Subject and the Disciple, are different Considerations of the same Man, St. *Paul* was a Free-Born Citizen of *Rome*, but he was Baptiz'd by *Ananias*; his Baptism could not entitle him to those Privileges his Citizenship did; he therefore pleaded it tho' a Christian and he afterwards suffer'd by the Laws he was bound to. For the Priest or Apostle is as much a Subject to his Prince, as any *Jew* or *Gentile*; and the Christian Prince is as answerable to God, as any of his Subjects. He therefore knows it to be his Duty to obey the command of his Lord, and to protect Christ's Ministers in the Execution of their Office: And if his commands shall be contrary to the Gospel, the Christian Subject knows the Resolution taken, *that we ought to Obey God rather than Men.* Acts. V. 29.

All are taught in this Church, that the canon of the Holy Scriptures is completed, with the severest Denunciation against them that shall add thereto: Our Rule of Faith is contain'd and concluded in them; 'tis not in the Priest's Power to add ought of his own Invention, or of other Mens; or not to Preach what is therein prescrib'd. And so far the Christian Magistrate willingly hears Christ's Ministers, for Christ's sake; if they go farther, he may, and ought to repress them. *Imperare facienda*, he knows to be his own Province in the outward Policy of the Church, but not *Imperata facere* ἡ ἐξουσία τοῦ βασιλέως, the first Christian Emperor challenged to be within his Prerogative; but ἡ ἐξουσία τοῦ κυρίου, to Minister in Holy things, he own'd to belong to others called thereto.

And therefore that Assertion, that Christian Princes have Power to Minister in all Holy Offices in the Church, because by their Authority they protect and regulate the doing of it, is inconsequential in Mr. *Hobbs* and our late Author. They have not this Power, as *Princes*; for then Heathen Princes might be Christian Priests. Have they it then from the Law of God? Far the contrary, in the Remarkable Instances of *Uzziah*, *Corah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*! *It appertaineth not unto thee Uzziah, to burn Incense unto the Lord, but to the Priests, (said Azariah, with Fourscore Priests of the Lord,) and they withstood Uzziah the King.* 2 Chron. XXVI. 18. And the Example of the Dreadful Judgment which was inflicted by God upon these Men, that would usurp the Priestly Office, (one a Sovereign King, the other three with their followers, mighty Princes of Renow,) hath hitherto stood a warning against the like presumption; and will continue so to do, till it shall be prov'd, that the Consecration of the Lord's Supper, Num. 16. 23. 33. and the Administration of Baptism, is of little or no Concern in Religion, compar'd with the Burning of Incense.

Have then Christian Princes this Right from the Gospel, or from Immemorial Custom? But there is not any one Example in Church-History for a Precedent; only perhaps of the Apostate *Julian*, who as High-Priest, offered Sacrifices to the Heathen Gods in despite to Christianity: (To which yet he was consecrated after their way.) An Example (one would think) not to be set by a Christian Author, to a Christian Prince! But there is no Record in the Church of Christ of any Christian Emperor that Baptiz'd, tho' of several, who were themselves Baptiz'd by his Ministers. Tho' Jesus Christ Converted St. *Paul*, Acts 9. 18. 22. 26. yet *Ananias* (one of the 70) was sent to Baptize him, and wash away his Sins. Tho' the Angel visited *Cornelius* from the Lord, yet was St. *Peter* sent to Preach the Gospel unto him. 10. 1. These are Examples of no unnecessary Caution, whereby it hath pleas'd

God to set us his own Pattern, for the securing the Administration of Holy things in the Church of Christ, in the Hands of the Stewards of his Mysteries.

And thus (too long I fear, but far short of the Dignity and Necessity of the Subject) have I examin'd the three points I propos'd; in which we may the better be allow'd to plead for our selves, since 'tis the cause of Religion and of the Protestant Faith which we vindicate against Atheism and Popery, against Unchristian Reviling and Immorality. On which Account it becomes the concern of every serious good Man of what persuasion soever) to rebuke that Spirit of calumny which of late is gone out into the World, in handling this Controversy.

For, 1. If there were any Religion in it, why is the Priesthood (of all Functions) set up for the Mark of their Scoffing and Bitterness? If they are Believers in Jesus Christ, why is this Persecution begun at the House of God? 'Tis not surely for Instruction against the Errors of any particular Church, but it is the Church it self, (*tho' built upon the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief Corner-Stone: Tho' purchased with the Blood of God;*) Eph. 2. 20. Acts 20. 28. that is in their Aim, who do thus damn the Church without distinction of true or false: For where is that Church left in the Christian World, which they profess their hope of Salvation in? 'Tis not the Infirmity of them who bear the Character, but the Order it self which is the Object of their Hatred, who revile the Ministers of Christ without Exception. 'Twas the Nature, not the Men, which that Philosopher (deservedly call'd the Man-Hater) persecuted by his Railings against all he met.—But they know what they do: For as a Learned Author observes in the Life of Julian, \* (who wanted not Scurrility to expose, nor any base Art to overthrow the Church of Christ,) 'The Clergy, says he, have always been the great Eye-Sores to Men of Pernicious and Atheistical Principles, whose desperate designs they have strenuously oppos'd, and could never be brought to be content that the World should be over-run with Atheism and Impiety; and thereby betray the Souls committed to their Charge.

2. 'Tis against Popery we rise up for 'tis their Objection, (so often baffled by the Martyrs and Champions of our Reformation,) that the Protestant Religion is built upon Parliamentary Power; † that we have no Priests, no Sacraments amongst us. By which Insinuation they have drawn many over to the Church of Rome. *Vid. Ep. Ded.* 'Tis their way of arguing, that because we hold those Doctrines which are to be prov'd from the Scriptures, we do not differ from them in their idolitrous Absurdities. And such are the wise and honest Inferences of this Author! that we ought not to deny Transubstantiation because believe the real Presence Sacramentally: ‡ Because we consecrate Churches, we ought not to condemn their Consecration of Bells Beads and Candles, with many other Insinuations at the latter end of his Book for many Pages together. Immoderate Railing doth but prejudice a good Cause that is founded on the truth and charity of the Gospel. And when we see the Edge of the Weapon turn'd against this Church, which all the Churches of Christendom (except the *Romish* and their Adherents \*) do hold to be a true and sound part of Christ's Church, in whose cause is the Sword of our Adversaries drawn?

\* Dr. Cave in his Life of Julian.

† Rights of the Christian Church. ‡ Rights of the Christian Church pag. 397, Sect 29. p. 375. Sect. 22. \* Viz. some part lately of the Greek Church, by the Influences, Power, and Money of the Roman Church, too much prevailing on them in their miserable condition

3dly, 'Tis most Unchristian Revilings we stand against : with which I will not <sup>de-</sup>se my own thoughts, nor offend Chast Ears; but as Christ pray'd for his Murderers) pray God to give the Authors of them a timely sight of their Errors ? to take from them this Gall of Bitterness ; and to give them a serious Repentance, that (if it may be,) they may make Reparation for their Blasphemous Reproaches ; and that they may have at last their part and lot in the Kingdom of Christ, which they do now so miserably afflict and oppose. Lastly, 'Tis in the defence of all Christian Duties and good Morality : For, it is by these Ministers of the Gospel, that Faith in God and Christ, is Preach'd in the same Articles that have always been receiv'd in the Church, and are in the Scriptures, and (together with Faith) Good Works as necessary to Salvation : The respective Duties to God and Man, to love our Neighbour as our selves ; to Honour and Obey the Queen, and all that are put in Authority under her ; and to submit our selves to all our Governours, &c. For these Reasons, we are the more zealous in Vindicating the just Powers and Dignity of our Mission, And since we own at the same time, and teach all Dutiful Submission to our Superiors ; and you in this Audience of the higher Rank, receive this Tribute both from our selves, and from those below your in your own Order ; let me humbly bespeak you in the Apostle's Words to consider, that we are Men of like Passions with you, and Preach unto you that you should turn from these Vanities to the living God. Acts 14, 15. We hold this Treasure in Earthen Vessels, that the Excellency of the Power may be of God and not of us. Eph. 4.

7. Let it be your Humanity then, to pass by Human Infirmities in us ! The distinction of your birth, education and state, not to be Revilers and Prophane in holy things ! Your Justice, not to fix the Faults of a few upon the Order ! If 'tis not your Charity (after her Majesties great Example) to Relieve, yet let it be your goodness, not to add Sorrow to Affliction, and expose a poor Minister of Jesus Christ for his Poverty, whose Patrimony may perhaps be in your Hands : For as the meanest Man is made in the Image of God, so is the Character of the Priesthood of Christ, in the poorest of our Order, as in the Highest. Let it then be your Christianity, to reverence that holy Function, by whose Hands you were made the Heirs of Salvation ! and let it be esteem'd the most abject and abandon'd state, a Christian can fall into, to blaspheme God by oppressing or reviling the Ministers of Jesus Christ ! For the Contempt doth terminate in God. He that despiseth you, saith Christ, despiseth me, and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me Luke 10. 16. Whatsoever we are in our selves, (the worst of us I hope not so bad as our Adversaries Represent the best ; and the best of us, the meanest of God's Servants in our own Eyes ; ) yet we are Ambassadors for Christ : 2 Cor. 5. 20. as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God. Account of us as the Ministers of Christ, and Stewards of the Mysteries of God. 1 Cor. 4. 1. Let the Elders that rule well, (they especially who labour in the Word and Doctrine) be counted worthy of double Honour : 1 Tim. 5.

17. And so shall your Examples, whom God hath plac'd on high for the Light and defence of his Church, have influence on them of inferior Degree, and less polish'd in their manners. Oh ! Let not this Spiritual Wickedness be in high Places. Eph. 6. 12. I am the better assur'd, knowing before whom I speak ; them who do not unwillingly hear a Doctrine which they endeavour to support, and by a good Example to discountenance and beat down the contrary Vice. And this, my Reverend Brethren, for which I cannot fail of having your Testimony,) is the best Congratulation we can give to our Right Reverend and Honourable Diocesan, in to these parts of his Diocese. For this is what adds the Christian Lustre to his own Birth, and makes the Hereditary Honour of an Ancient House descend more genuine. These things are so agreeable to his Generous Spirit, have been so much, and so long the Exercise of his Episcopal Care, for the defence of his Clergy and the establish'd Church against all Insults, that it must needs be the most acceptable Reception to him, to find us gratefully acknowledging the same Noble Christian Dispositions to be in the Gentlemen of the highest Rank, and esteem amongst us ; (some Argument I hope for our selves, that we are not thought altogether unworthy of their Favour and Protection.) To this then, let us add the Offering of our own Duty and Gratitude ; our sense of the greater Obligations we are under, to keep our selves unspotted from the World ; James 1. 27. and to be the more careful, to do nothing that may reflect a just Scandal upon our Holy Profession ! least Satan get an Advantage of us ; for we are not ignorant of his Devices ; 1 Cor. 2. 11. Nor yet of the Instruments, he sets up in Opposition to Christ's Kingdom. But we know who hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. Hebr. 13. 5. And him who hath promis'd, Lo ! I am with you always, even unto the end of the World. — Mat. 28. 20. To whose Grace and Holy Protection we commit our selves and the Church of Christ, giving Glory to God the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit, three Persons one God, Blessed for evermore ! Amen.